

Claims:

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1. A method for separating a slip sheet from a plate comprising:

directing gas at the plate interface with the slip sheet to create a layer of gas between the plate and the slip sheet; and

directing gas at the slip sheet to blow the slip sheet into a discarded slip sheet area.

2. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the slip sheet is stored in a discarded slip sheet holding area.

3. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas directed at the plate is supplied by nozzles.

4. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas is air.

5. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas is at a pressure suitable for removing slip sheets and injecting air between slip sheets and plates.

6. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas is at 80 psi.

7. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas nozzles directing gas at the plate interface with the slip sheet comprise jet nozzles.

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8. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas nozzles directing gas at the slip sheet comprise jet nozzles.

9. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the gas is pulsed.

10. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 1 wherein the slip sheet is guided to the holding area by a slip sheet chute.

11. A slip sheet removal system according to claim 10 wherein a top plate of the chute has an angled front edge which further guides the slip sheet into the holding area.

12. An apparatus for separating a slip sheet from a plate comprising:

at least one gas nozzle that directs gas at the plate interface with the slip sheet to create a layer of gas between the plate and the slip sheet and directs gas at the slip sheet to blow the slip sheet into a discarded slip sheet area.

13. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein one of the at least one gas nozzles is a fan nozzle.

14. An apparatus according to claim 12 wherein one of the at least one gas nozzles is a jet nozzle.

15. An apparatus for separating slip sheets from plates comprising:

a cart comprising a plate handler area to hold at least one stack of plates interleaved with slip sheets and a discarded slip sheet holding bin;

a movable head comprising at least one vacuum cup to  
acquire plates one at a time from the cart;  
5 and at least one gas nozzle to create a layer of gas  
between the plates and the slip sheets and to blow the  
slip sheets into the holding bin.

10 16. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the plate  
handler area holds two stacks of plates interleaved with slip  
sheets.

15 17. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the front  
end corners of the plate handler area are squared to define an  
area for the plates to rest.

20 18. An apparatus according to claim 15 where the corners  
are squared and then taper outward to allow the slip sheets to  
pass through more easily.

25 19. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the plate  
handler area is separated from the discarded slip sheet holding  
bin by a plate which acts at the base of the handler area and the  
top of the holding bin.

30 20. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the bottom  
front end of the cart is slanted at an outward angle to prevent  
discarded slip sheets from piling up at the front of the cart.

35 21. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the back of  
the cart is removable to allow removal of discarded slip sheets.

22. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the head  
comprises a plurality of gas nozzles.

23. An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein at least one of the gas nozzles is a fan nozzle.

24. An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein at least one of the gas nozzles is a jet nozzle.

25. An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the head comprises a chute.

26. An apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the top of the chute comprises a baffle.

27. An apparatus according to claim 26 wherein the baffle has an angled front edge which further guides the slip sheet into the holding area.

28. An apparatus for separating slip sheets from plates comprising:

means for handling plates,  
means for holding discarded slip sheets,  
and means for directing slip sheets from a handling area to the means for holding.

29. An apparatus according to claim 28 wherein plates are handled in an area defined by two side panels and a bottom plate.

30. An apparatus according to claim 29 wherein front end corners of the area are squared.

31. An apparatus according to claim 29 wherein front end corners of the area are squared and then taper off in order for the slip sheets to more easily pass through.

